

EMERGENCY SUPPORT FUNCTION 9 SEARCH AND RESCUE

PRIMARY AGENCIES: Washington State Military Department
Emergency Management Division
Washington State Department of Transportation

SUPPORT AGENCIES: Washington State Department of Ecology
Washington State Department of Fish and Wildlife
Washington State Department of General Administration
Washington State Department of Health
Washington State Military Department
National Guard
Washington State Department of Natural Resources
Washington State Parks and Recreation Commission
Washington State Patrol
American Red Cross
Federal Emergency Management Agency
U.S. Department of Defense
U.S. Department of Transportation, Coast Guard

I. INTRODUCTION

A. Purpose

To provide for the coordination and effective utilization of all available resources in the conduct of Search and Rescue (SAR) operations.

B. Scope

1. State law encompasses both wildland and disaster SAR within the definition of land SAR (Section 38.52.010 (7) RCW). However, the federal government separates the two and covers wildland SAR in the National SAR Plan and disaster SAR, specifically Urban Search and Rescue (US&R) in the Federal Response Plan (FRP). For clarity, this Emergency Support Function (ESF) will refer specifically to US&R when there is a connection with the FRP. In other cases, "SAR" is presumed to mean land SAR including both wildland and disaster SAR.
2. Air SAR is defined by Chapter 47.68 RCW and Chapter 468.200 WAC.
3. A separate Underground (Mine) Rescue Plan is maintained by the Washington State Military Department, Emergency Management Division (EMD), SAR Coordinator.

II. POLICIES

- A. See Basic Plan.

- B. Land SAR operations are primarily initiated, coordinated, and directed by local jurisdictions in accordance with state and local jurisdiction plans. However, one political subdivision may not be able to provide the necessary equipment or sufficient numbers of trained personnel to successfully carry out a SAR mission. Requests for additional resources including special skills, expertise, or equipment are coordinated by the state EMD.
- C. Air SAR for missing or downed civil aircraft is the responsibility of Department of Transportation (WSDOT) (Chapter 47.68 RCW).
- D. An Underground (Mine) SAR Plan is required by RCW 38.52.037.
- E. The Incident Command System (ICS) is the preferred method of on-scene incident management for SAR operations within the state. In accordance with RCW 38.52.400 (1), ICS shall be used for multi-agency/multi-jurisdiction SAR operations.

III. SITUATION

A. Emergency/Disaster Conditions and Hazards

1. The wide range of and easy access to outdoor recreational activities in the state and the large number of people who participate in those activities results in a significant number of people becoming lost and/or injured or killed every year. In addition, use of civil aircraft within the state continues to increase.
2. The wildland-urban interface situation, which has greatly affected the fire service, has also impacted SAR. People become lost in wildland and suburban areas only a few minutes travel from their homes.
3. The state is threatened by major events such as airline crashes, avalanches, earthquakes, volcanic eruptions, or tsunamis. Such disasters can result in large, multi-jurisdictional SAR operations.
4. Earthquakes pose a particularly severe threat. A major earthquake would trigger SAR operations involving local responders, statewide SAR volunteer organizations, the Washington National Guard (WNG), local jurisdiction and state/province responders from neighboring jurisdictions, federal response agencies including the military, and the Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA) US&R Task Forces.
5. A major subduction zone earthquake may also generate a large tsunami, impacting the state's Pacific Coast, as well as, avalanches and landslides in the Cascade and Olympic Mountains resulting in large, multi-jurisdictional SAR operations in these regions as well.

B. Planning Assumptions

1. SAR missions will continue to increase as the population, recreational opportunities, and the wildland/urban interface continue to grow.

2. The widely differing terrain and climatic conditions in the state mandate a locally based SAR first response system.
3. Natural and technological disasters will greatly increase the scope of SAR operations.
4. A major earthquake in the Puget Sound area will result in major multi-jurisdictional SAR operations.

IV. CONCEPT OF OPERATIONS

A. General

1. Land SAR operations are primarily initiated, coordinated, and directed by local jurisdictions in accordance with state and local jurisdiction plans using local resources registered in accordance with Chapter 118-04 WAC. Requests for additional resources including special skills, expertise, or equipment are coordinated by the state EMD. Multi-jurisdictional SAR operations may be coordinated by the state EMD, when requested.
2. Air SAR for missing or downed civil aircraft is the responsibility of WSDOT Aviation Division.
3. The Underground (Mine) Rescue Plan covers aspects of underground rescue including caves, active mines, abandoned mines, and underground works. The Plan is maintained by the state EMD SAR Coordinator.
4. If a catastrophic event results in major multi-jurisdictional SAR operations, the state Rescue Coordination Center (RCC) may be activated to provide coordination and support for the extensive in-state, state, out-of-state, federal and international SAR resources required by the magnitude of the disaster.
5. Communications with the state Emergency Operations Center (EOC) from the incident command post, the RCC, and/or from the local jurisdictions EOC will be through the normal radio and telephone capabilities, augmented by back-up direction and control systems, and by resources provided by the WNG, federal military organizations, and/or FEMA, as appropriate.

B. Organization

1. Local Jurisdictions

Local chief law enforcement officers are responsible for SAR operations within their jurisdictions. Local directors of emergency management coordinate direct support to SAR operations in their political subdivisions and register volunteers. Local programs also provide training and education for volunteer SAR units, as well as, for the organization and deployment of SAR resources.

2. Volunteer Organizations

SAR volunteer units with varying capabilities are organized under local jurisdiction authority. Volunteers, otherwise known as emergency workers, are registered at the local jurisdiction in accordance with Chapter 38.52 RCW and Chapter 118-04 WAC. They are able to respond to the spectrum of local emergencies or disasters. Through coordination by the state EMD, volunteers can also provide support to local jurisdictions statewide, as well as, neighboring states or provinces when provided for by Mutual Aid Agreements. Volunteers specific to the air SAR mission are registered by WSDOT, Aviation Division under Chapter 47.68 RCW and Chapter 468-200 WAC.

3. State Organizations

- a. The state EMD appoints a state coordinator of SAR operations, maintains a 24-hour capability to respond to requests for assistance from local jurisdictions, and will coordinate the resources of other political subdivisions, as well as state, out-of-state, federal, and international agencies in support of the requesting jurisdiction. The state SAR Coordinator may be deployed to the scene to provide this coordination. Multi-jurisdictional SAR operations may be coordinated by the state EMD, when requested. Major multi-jurisdictional SAR operations, such as may result from a natural or technological disaster, may require the activation of the state RCC.
- b. WSDOT, Aviation Division maintains a response capability to conduct air SAR for missing or downed civil aircraft as mandated by Chapter 47.68 RCW. The WSDOT Aviation Division Incident Commander exercises command over all aircraft and aircrew personnel participating in the mission. The state SAR Coordinator may be deployed to the scene to provide for coordination of land SAR resources or for other assistance, as may be required.

4. Federal Organizations

- a. The U.S. Air Force directs inland SAR operations for downed or missing military aircraft, scheduled carriers, aircraft carrying people or things of national significance, and aircraft of international origin. The U.S. Air Force also coordinates federal military assistance for local and state SAR operations through the Air Force Rescue Coordination Center (AFRCC).
- b. The U.S. Coast Guard directs maritime SAR operations on or above navigable waters or off the Pacific shores and may assist with inland SAR operations. Within the state of Washington this occurs through the Seattle Rescue Coordination Center (RCC), 13th Coast Guard District Command Center.
- c. The National Park Service directs SAR operations on the lands under its exclusive jurisdiction unless by agreement this is

delegated to or shared with another responsible agency such as local jurisdiction law enforcement.

- d. At the request of the appropriate federal agency, the state SAR Coordinator may be deployed to the scene to provide for the coordination of state resources.
- e. The FRP ESF 9 provides for the establishment of a National US&R Response System with FEMA as the lead agency. There are 25 Task Forces within the system capable of responding anywhere in the nation. One task force, the Puget Sound US&R is located in Washington State. US&R Task Forces may begin arriving in the state within twelve hours of an event.

C. Procedures

1. Land SAR

- a. The state EMD, when notified of a SAR mission by an authorized official, will issue a state mission number. The issuance of this mission number authorizes the employment of volunteers under the provisions and protection of Chapter 38.52 RCW.

The state EMD will issue a mission number to an authorized official in response to a downed or missing aircraft for land SAR operations associated with that mission and will coordinate this with WSDOT Aviation Division. The Aviation Division Incident Commander may obtain the mission number on behalf of local agencies involved in order to facilitate response.

- b. The state EMD, upon receiving a request for assistance from an authorized official, will coordinate the resources of other political subdivisions, as well as state, out-of-state, federal, and international agencies in support of the requesting jurisdiction. The state SAR Coordinator may be deployed to the scene to provide this coordination.
- c. Multi-jurisdictional SAR operations may be coordinated by the state EMD, when requested. Major multi-jurisdictional SAR operations such as may result from a natural or technological disaster may require the activation of the state RCC. The state RCC may either be collocated with the state EOC or at a location in proximity to the incident site. The director of the state RCC is the state SAR Coordinator.

The WNG and other state agencies as required provide personnel and equipment to staff and operate the state RCC. Requests for assistance from the jurisdictions affected by the disaster will be received, processed, and prioritized. The RCC will coordinate the reception, staging, preparation for employment, and deployment to the scene of in-state, state, out-of-state, federal, and international

SAR resources responding to the disaster. The RCC will serve as the state's interface with ESF 9 when the FRP is implemented.

- d. The WNG establishes a US&R Joint Task Force (JTF) to conduct light US&R operations and to provide support to state and local US&R resources. The FRP ESF 9 provides for the establishment of a U.S. Department of Defense JTF to support federal US&R efforts. However, federal US&R Task Forces may begin arriving in the state within twelve hours of an event; the Department of Defense (DOD) JTF may not be in place to provide support. The WNG must, therefore, be prepared to undertake this JTF mission initially.

2. Air SAR

- a. Air SAR for missing or downed civil aviation aircraft is the responsibility of WSDOT Aviation Division (Chapter 47.68 RCW).
- b. WSDOT Aviation Division may receive an alert notice (ALNOT) of overdue aircraft from the Federal Aviation Administration and/or be notified of an activated Emergency Locator Transmitter (ELT) from the AFRCC or other sources.
- c. The WSDOT Aviation Division Incident Commander exercises command over all aircraft and air crew personnel participating in the air SAR mission.
- d. Upon location of the downed aircraft, the incident becomes a land SAR operation under the direction and control of the chief law enforcement officer in whose jurisdiction the incident site is located. The WSDOT Aviation Incident Commander provides support as available and assumes responsibility for the crash site for investigatory purposes.
- e. The WSDOT Aviation Incident Commander may notify the state EMD and obtain a mission number on behalf of participating local law enforcement agencies for coverage of volunteers involved in related land SAR operations. The state SAR Coordinator may be deployed to the scene to provide for coordination of these resources, or for other assistance, as may be required.

3. Underground (Mine) SAR

A separate plan, along with the state EOC, Duty Officer procedures is maintained by the state EMD SAR Coordinator. The state EOC Duty Officers use the procedures in responding to a local jurisdiction's request for SAR resources in the event of an underground rescue incident.

D. Mitigation Activities

1. Joint Primary Agencies

a. Washington State Military Department, Emergency Management Division

- (1) Reviews proposed SAR legislation to assure it is supportive of the state's emergency management mission.
- (2) Supports preventive SAR programs.

b. Washington State Department of Transportation

- (1) Develops and provides training and education in aviation safety and aircrew survival.
- (2) Reviews proposed SAR legislation, as it applies to the use and control of aircraft, to assure it is supportive of the state's EMD mission.

2. Support Agencies

Washington State Departments of Ecology, Fish and Wildlife, General Administration, Health, Natural Resources, Parks and Recreation Commission, Washington State Patrol, American Red Cross, Federal Emergency Management Agency, U.S. Department of Defense, and the U.S. Department of Transportation

Support preventive search and rescue, aviation safety, and survival programs with available resources, when requested.

3. Local Jurisdictions and Volunteer Organizations

Develop and present preventive SAR programs through public awareness and school education programs.

E. Preparedness Activities

1. Joint Primary Agencies

a. Washington State Military Department, Emergency Management Division

- (1) Appoints a state coordinator of SAR operations.
- (2) Establishes systems to coordinate requests for in-state, state, out-of-state, federal, and international SAR resources.

- (3) Supports law enforcement personnel and volunteer organizations and individuals with SAR related training.
- (4) Assists local jurisdictions in the organization of SAR units.
- (5) Coordinates and maintains liaison with local SAR Coordinators, local departments of emergency management, WSDOT Aviation Division, WNG, the SAR organizations of neighboring states and provinces, the federal military organizations of the United States and Canada, and FRP ESF 9.
- (6) Plans for and prepares to activate the state RCC.

b. Washington State Department of Transportation

- (1) Establishes systems to direct and control air SAR operations for downed or missing civil aircraft.
- (2) Plans for and prepares to provide for staff representation to the state RCC.
- (3) Plans for and prepares to provide air resource support for land SAR operations.
- (4) Publishes and is prepared to implement the State and Regional Disaster Airlift (SARDA) Plan.

2. Support Agencies

a. Washington State Departments of Ecology, Fish and Wildlife, General Administration, Health, Natural Resources, Parks and Recreation Commission, Washington State Patrol, American Red Cross, Federal Emergency Management Agency, U.S. Department of Defense, and the U.S. Department of Transportation

Prepare to provide support to the state SAR and Air SAR programs with available resources, when requested.

b. Washington State Military Department, National Guard

Plans for and prepares to establish an US&R JTF to conduct light US&R operations, to provide support to state and local US&R resources, and to coordinate support for federal US&R resources until such time as the federal DOD JTF can be established.

F. Response Activities

1. Joint Primary Agencies

a. Washington State Military Department

- (1) Coordinates requests for in-state, state, out-of-state, federal, and international SAR resources.
- (2) Provides personnel and equipment to establish the state RCC.
- (3) Activates the state RCC and provides the state SAR Coordinator to be the RCC Director.
- (4) Provides resources for SAR operations, when available.

c. Washington State Department of Transportation

- (1) Directs and controls air SAR operations for downed or missing civil aircraft.
- (2) Provides staff representation to the state RCC.
- (3) Provides air resources, when available, for land SAR operations.
- (4) Implements the SARDA Plan in accordance with established WSDOT procedures.

2. Support Agencies

a. Washington State Departments of Corrections, Ecology, Fish and Wildlife, General Administration, Health, Natural Resources, Washington State Patrol, Parks and Recreation Commission, American Red Cross, Federal Emergency Management Agency, U.S. Department of Defense, and the U.S. Department of Transportation

Support SAR operations with available resources, when requested.

b. Military Department, National Guard

- (1) Establishes a US&R JTF to conduct light US&R operations, to provide support to state and local US&R resources, and to coordinate support for federal US&R resources until such time as the federal DOD JTF can be established.
- (2) Provides resources for SAR operations, when available.

- (3) Provides personnel and equipment to establish the state RCC.

G. Recovery Activities

1. Joint Primary Agencies

a. Washington State Military Department

Assists in the return of all SAR organizations and personnel to a high state of preparedness, so as to be able to respond to future SAR missions, with available resources, when requested.

b. Washington State Department of Transportation

Assists in the return of all SAR organizations and personnel to a high state of preparedness, so as to be able to respond to future SAR missions, with available resources, when requested.

2. Support Agencies

a. Washington State Departments of Ecology, Fish and Wildlife, General Administration, Health, Natural Resources, Washington State Patrol, Parks and Recreation Commission, American Red Cross, Federal Emergency Management Agency, U.S. Department of Defense, and the U.S. Department of Transportation

Assist in the return of all SAR organizations and personnel to a high state of preparedness, so as to be able to respond to future SAR missions, with available resources, when requested.

b. Washington State Military Department, National Guard

Assists in the return of all SAR organizations and personnel to a high state of preparedness, so as to be able to respond to future SAR missions, with available resources, when requested.

V. RESPONSIBILITIES

A. Joint Primary Agencies

1. Washington State Military Department

- a. Appoints a state coordinator of SAR operations.
- b. Maintains a 24-hour coordination and warning system.
- c. Provides protection and reimbursement for SAR volunteers statewide.

- d. Coordinates resource requests for local jurisdictions involved in SAR operations.
- e. Coordinates multi-jurisdictional SAR operations, when requested.

2. Washington State Department of Transportation, Aviation Division

- a. Directs air SAR operations for downed or missing civil aircraft.
- b. Supports local law enforcement agencies during the land SAR portion of the mission.
- c. Provides support to local law enforcement agencies during land SAR operations by providing aircraft and air operations support.

B. Support Agencies

1. Washington State Departments of Ecology, Fish and Wildlife, General Administration, Health, Natural Resources, Washington State Patrol, Parks and Recreation Commission, and the American Red Cross

Provide appropriate support to the state SAR and air SAR programs.

2. Washington State Military Department, National Guard

Establishes a US&R JTF to conduct light US&R operations, to provide support to state and local US&R resources, and to coordinate support for federal US&R resources until such time as the federal DOD JTF can be established.

3. U.S. Department of Defense

a. Fifth U.S. Army

Coordinates federal military resources in support of SAR operations under a state Declaration of Emergency or a major Disaster Declaration by the President.

b. Air Force Rescue Coordination Center

Coordinates federal resources providing SAR assistance to local and state officials in accordance with the National SAR Plan.

4. U.S. Department of Transportation, Coast Guard Seattle Regional Rescue Coordination Center

Coordinates U.S. Coast Guard resources providing SAR assistance to local jurisdiction and state officials in accordance with the National SAR Plan.

5. Federal Emergency Management Agency

Coordinates with federal agencies to perform US&R operations in accordance with the FRP.

VI. RESOURCE REQUIREMENTS

- A. The state EMD and the WSDOT will provide the required personnel, facilities, and equipment in support of their respective SAR missions. Other state agencies will support SAR operations with available resources, when requested.
- B. The local jurisdiction law enforcement and emergency management organizations will provide the required personnel, facilities, and equipment in support of their respective SAR missions. Other local jurisdiction agencies will provide support to SAR operations with available resources.
- C. SAR volunteers are organized and trained at the local jurisdiction level. Personal clothing and equipment and unit equipment is provided by the individual and/or the volunteer organization. Compensation for lost or damaged personal and unit equipment and reimbursement for medical and extraordinary expenses is available through the state EMD in accordance with Chapter 38.52 RCW and Chapter 118-04 WAC.
- D. Federal agencies will support SAR operations with available resources when requested and as coordinated by U.S. Department of Defense and/or U.S. Department of Transportation organizations.

VII. REFERENCES

- A. Chapter 38.52 RCW.
- B. Chapter 47.68 RCW.
- C. Chapter 118-04 WAC.
- D. Chapter 468-200 WAC.
- E. Federal Response Plan, ESF 9.
- F. Incident Command System, ICS Operational System description (ICS-120-1), National Interagency Incident Management System.
- G. National Search and Rescue Plan (U.S. Department of Defense Joint Publication 3-50.1).
- H. Underground (Mine) Rescue Plan, State of Washington, Emergency Management Division, 1985.

VIII. DEFINITIONS AND ACRONYMS

See CEMP Basic Plan, Appendix 4.